

VZCZCXRO1145
OO RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHMK #0524 1620806
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 110806Z JUN 07
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6909
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISI/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHBVAKS/COMUSNAVCENT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000524

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2017

TAGS: PGOV PHUM ASEC BA POL HUMRIT

SUBJECT: ALLEGED BEATING VICTIMS RELEASED FROM CUSTODY

REF: A. MANAMA 0518

1B. MANAMA 0476

Classified By: DCM Susan L. Ziadeh for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) The public prosecution June 7 released Ali Saeed Al Khabaz and Hameed Yousif Ahmed from custody after prosecutors became convinced of their innocence based upon eyewitness reports. Al Khabaz and Ahmed had been detained during a violent protest the night of May 21 in the Shia village of Sanabis. Security personnel reportedly beat them after their detention, resulting in injuries that caused both men to be admitted into the Bahrain Defense Force hospital (Ref A). According to Al Wasat newspaper, the two were released as a result of a meeting the day before between Interior Minister Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa and Shia opposition society Al Wifaq secretary general and parliamentary deputy Shaikh Ali Salman. Al Wifaq spokesman Jassim Al Moamen said, "The society (Al Wifaq) highly appreciates the decision of the Minister and calls on him to release the rest of the detainees (who were picked up during other demonstrations)." Al Moamen added that the two men would continue to receive medical treatment for their injuries.

12. (C) Comment: The case of Al Khabaz and Ahmed became a bit too hot for the government, with the international media covering reports of a Human Rights Watch call for an independent commission to investigate the source of the two detainees' injuries. By releasing the two following the meeting with Salman, the government seeks to ease some of the pressure while also allowing credit to go to Al Wifaq, which is part of the political system, and not the hardline Shia Haq Movement. In a likely quid pro quo, Salman in his June 8 Friday prayer sermon urged the public to abide by laws regulating gatherings and protests rather than having an "uncontrollable security situation."

Visit Embassy Manama's Classified Website:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/manama/>

MONROE